

A Proclamation for the reformation of sundry abuses about making of Clothes,
called Deuonshire Kersies, or Dozens, whereby the Statutes made
in Queene Maries time, for the weight, length, and
breadth thereof, may be duely obser-
ued hereafter.



Whereas notwithstanding sundry Actes of Parliament heretofore made for the true making of woollen Cloth, being a commoditie bestowed by God vpon this our Realme aboue others, which in time past hath bene and yet is in all places beyond the Seas, where trade or traffique is vsed, holden in great price and estimation, being truly and well made: Yet as it is signified vnto our Councell by our Iustices of Peace of our Countie of Deuon, and other expert and graue men of that Countie, that the Artificers in the mysterie of Cloth-making in that Countrey, namely the weauers and Tuckers vsing to weaue and tucke Clothes, commonly called Deuonshire Kersies or Dozens, haue of late inuented for their owne gaine meanes to defraude the lawes therein heretofore made, and the true intent and meaning of the makers of the same. The weauers generally making the said Kersies too light when they come from their beame, to containe after they be well shewred, thicked, milled, and fully dried, the weight of after the rate of euery yard one pound, as by the Acte of Parliament made in the fourth and fift yeres of the Reignes of the late King Philip, and our late deare Sister the late Queene Mary, they ought to doe. And some by vsing of false scales, and some of them by deceitfull mixing of their Yarne, and false weauing of their clothes, making the muster ende thereof, and along by the edges of faire Yarne, and well and close wouen, and the other ende and the middle part thereof along by the creast of farre courser Yarne, and slightly and euill and open wouen. And likewise the Tuckers by minishing and cutting off part of the clothes brought to their handes, and by extreame racking and stretching of them to reame them to a farre greater breadth then the cloth can beare, vnder colour to bring it to a marchantable breadth and length, so as by no meanes they can bee perfect Clothes. Whereunto we are the rather induced to giue credite by the complaint of late made vnto vs (containing such deceits) by the States of Holland. Of which insufficiencies growen by the inuentions and newe deuices of the sayde Artificers the Clothiers of our sayd Countie vsing to buie the sayde clothes, and to bring them to the market in Blackewell hall, there to bee sold, haue lamentably complayned to our sayd Councell, shewing vnto them their great losses and hinderances thereby vpon search of the said clothes, although in trueth it be not their fault, and at our hands by them haue sought some reformation. Whereof we hauing consideration how beneficiall a trade the Clothiers is, and how inconuenient it is to suffer such an enormitie in deceitfull making of the sayd clothes, and yet as hitherto no speciall lawe made fully to redresse or preuent the same: haue thought good with the aduise of our sayd Councell, to take present order therein, in forme hereafter ensuing, and the same to continue till the next Parliament, vnlesse it shal by our Proclamation be in the meane time altered or reuoked. First, we expressly charge and commaund, that the lawes already made, and standing in force not repealed, for the true making of cloth, be duely accomplished and executed in all things, and that euery Officer diligently doe performe his office about the same accordingly. And furthermore our pleasure is, and we doe hereby straightly charge and command, that euery of the said Deuonshire Kersies, called Dozens, to be wouen and tucked within the Countie of Deuon, or any other Countie next adioyning thereunto, from the feast of the Annunciation of our Ladie now next comming, being rawe, vnshewred, vnthicked, and vnwet cloth, as it commeth out of the weauers beame, shal without any fraude, deceit, pollicie or deuise, or any stuffe thereunto deceitfully or vnlawfully added, weigh fiftene pounds in the market at the least, and so being rawe, shal containe in the market betweene fiftene and sixtene yardes in length, yard and inch of the rule, without which weight and length (as we are enformed by men skilful & expert in that trade) they can by no meanes afterward, being well shewred, thicked, milled, and fully wrought and dried, containe the length and weight in the sayd Statute provided and appointed, viz. twelue yards in length, and twelue pound in weight at the least. And that also the same bee sewantly wouen throughout of well and like sorted yarne, vtterly forbidding that any weauer vsing to weaue the sayd clothes, shal vse

322
or about their weavings the said deceitfull meanes or mingling or weaving their yarne as aforesaid, or any other deceit-
full wayes or meanes. And so likewise forbidding the said Tuckers of the said clothes to minish any part of the said clothes
when they shall have them in their hands, or by any meanes so to draw them to bredth or length as thereby to impair the
cloth, but that by the well doing of them by the said Artificers, the deceitfull meanes above mentioned and complained on,
and all other like deceits to be used therein, may be thoroughly amended and reformed, and the said clothes made perfect and
good according to the true intent and meaning of the said lawes. For the more sure and perfect avoiding of which inconve-
niences, we also straightly charge and command all the said weavers, that every of them, weaving any of the said clothes,
shall on the one end of every such cloth weave his shoppe-marke, and shall also shut one purrell through both the ends of the
same, of some coloured yarne, every such purrell to be three quarters of an inch breadth at the least. And doe signifie unto
them the said Artificers, and so do we hereby require and authorize our Justices of peace in the said Countie of Devon, and
other the Counties adjoining, where the same kinde of Kerties called Devonshire dozens be or shall be made, if any of the
said Artificers shall in any point breake or offend this our commandement and proclamation: And that the said offence be
either confessed or duly proved by two lawfull witnesses before our said Justices of the peace in that Countie, where the
offence shall be committed, or first appeare to have bene committed, or any two of them, whereof one to be of the Quorum.
If thereupon the same offender shall not both satisfie the buyer of any such cloth so falsely or deceitfully wrought or used ac-
cording to the losse thereby sustained or to be sustained: and also enter into good band, with sufficient sureties, such as the
said Justices, or any two of them, as aforesaid, shall allow of to be taken to our use from thenceforth duly to observe our said
lawes, and this our proclamation concerning the premises: that then such offender, so not satisfying or not entering into
band, as aforesaid, be forthwith sent by to our Councell to receive such punishment for their said offence and contempt, as
to so great a contempt in such cases shall be thought requisite. And to the intent this our charge and commandement may
be in all things the better observed according to our meaning heerein declared, and that the offences and offenders may be
the better known and discovered, our will and pleasure is, that within every Market towne within our said Countie of
Devon, and other Counties neere adjoining, where the said kinde of Kerties are used or offered to be solde rawe and un-
wrought or undrest, two discreet and expert men shall be appointed by our said Justices or any two of them, as aforesaid, to
view, measure, and weigh all and all manner of Devonshire Kerties and dozens, and to see whether the same be made in
length, weight, and goodnesse according to the rate and proportion in this our proclamation before limited and appoin-
ted. And thereof from time to time to certifie our said Justices, or any two of them, as aforesaid, to the end the offenders in
that behalfe may be thereupon dealt with, as before is limited and declared. This our proclamation to endure untill the
first day of the next Parliament, or that we shall otherwise ordeine in that behalfe. Given at our Palace of Westminster
the xx. day of Januarie, in the xxxiii. yere of our reigne. 1591.

God save the Queene.

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